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ABSTRACT

A study described the 1990-91 and 1991-92 Chapter 1 Developer/Demonstration Program, Learning to Read through the Arts (LRTA), and evaluated the effectiveness of its implementation. The program offers intensive holistic reading and reading-oriented arts instruction to Chapter 1-eligible students, using an interdisciplinary, thematic approach that integrates a total arts program with a total reading and writing program. It provides remedial, developmental, and enrichment activities and skills. In 1990-91, LRTA operated at five sites in New York City, serving 467 students. In 1991-92, the program took place at 8 school-based sites, and served 867 students, including second graders for the first time--an increase of 86%. Evaluators reviewed program documents, interviewed program staff, observed program sites and classes, and analyzed students' scores on standardized reading tests. They determined that successful programs contain eight critical characteristics. In such programs: (1) a theme provides the focus for the curriculum; (2) art instruction incorporates all modalities and moves from the concrete to the abstract; (3) students are exposed to original art sources; (4) teachers develop materials that meet the needs of the students; (5) reading and writing activities are constantly assessed; (6) team members receive staff development and training; (7) parents are involved in the program; and (8) the program is supported by school administrators. Except for grades three and six in 1991-92, students met all program objectives. Staff members agreed that the program had a very positive impact on students' development academically, artistically, personally, and socially. (Three tables and six figures of data are included. An appendix contains 1990-91 sites program overviews from various program sites.) (SR)

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OREA Report

CHAPTER 1 DEVELOPER/DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM
LEARNING TO READ THROUGH THE ARTS
1990-91 and 1991-92

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CHAPTER 1 DEVELOPER/DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM
LEARNING TO READ THROUGH THE ARTS
1990-91 and 1991-92

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Learning to Read Through the Arts (L.T.R.T.A.) is an intensive holistic reading and reading-oriented arts instruction program for Chapter 1-eligible students who have scored below the cut-off point on a standardized reading test or have performed poorly in the classroom, and limited English proficient (LEP) students who have been recommended for participation on the basis of teacher ratings or classroom performance. Its overarching goal is to increase students' achievement in reading and writing through an interdisciplinary, thematic approach that integrates a total arts program--including visual and performing arts--with a total reading and writing program. It provides remedial, developmental, and enrichment activities and skills, and has been recognized as exemplary at the national, state, and local level. L.T.R.T.A. has been in operation in New York City's public schools since 1971, and is currently under the auspices of the Office of Professional Development and Leadership Training under the Deputy Chancellor for Instruction and Development.

Structurally, the program employs the services of reading teachers and artist/teachers who provide two-and-one-half hour workshops two days a week. The reading teacher uses creative, arts-oriented materials related to the site's theme in the reading/writing workshop, and the artist/teacher provides arts activities that are reading- and language-oriented in the arts workshop. The classroom teacher assists with both workshops as one or the other needed emphasis, and then reinforces the skills gained through L.T.R.T.A. when students return to their regular classes. In the 1991-92 program, students received 63 days of instruction, for a maximum of 150 hours of such instruction.

This report presents the findings of evaluations of the 1990-91 and 1991-92 programs by the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA). In 1990-91, L.T.R.T.A. operated at two school-based sites in Manhattan and one boroughwide site in each of three boroughs: the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. The program served 467 students that year. In 1991-92, the program took place at eight school-based sites, including six SURR schools, and served 867 students, including second graders for the first time--an increase of 86 percent. However, the number of staff members remained approximately the same.

Evaluators made visits to most program sites to observe program activities and interview a sample of school and program staff members. As a result of these efforts, the evaluation team identified a number of factors that are crucial to program success, and that were evident in the two program-years studied:

A theme provides the focus for the curriculum. During the 1990-92 school years, the theme of multiculturalism provided the focus for all program activities. This concentration provided both depth and focus for program activities, and was also utilized by classroom teachers in other subjects, thus enhancing the interdisciplinary nature of the program.

Art instruction incorporates all modalities and moves from the concrete to the abstract. Teachers noted that using a multi-sensory approach meant that children who were not successful in one modality had the chance for success in another, and that mastering simple, concrete skills motivates and enables lower-achieving students to generalize from these experiences.

Students are exposed to original art sources. In addition to theme workshops, students participated in field trips and special events about three times a month. These trips reinforced classroom and workshop lessons, and showed the students that learning can go on outside of school.

Teachers develop materials that meet the needs of the students. Collaborating team members often generate teaching materials that are geared to the students' interests and needs, and increase interaction and cooperation between team members.

Reading and writing activities are constantly assessed. Teachers reviewed incoming students' test scores and teacher reports at the start of the program to develop a profile of each student, and then maintained portfolios to monitor students' ongoing development.

Team members receive staff development training. Artist/teachers, reading teachers, and classroom teachers received a great deal of staff development training both before and during the program year. All staff members found this training extremely useful.

Parents are involved in the program. During both program years, parents were invited to participate in many activities. Those who participated were very enthusiastic about the program and felt that it had improved their child's attitude toward and skills in reading.

The program is supported by school administrators. Participants agreed that administrators were strongly supportive of the program, and provided the assistance necessary to make it work.

Staff members agreed that the program had a very positive impact on students' development in academic and artistic areas, and in their personal and social growth, and most felt strongly that arts education is an excellent vehicle for developing such skills.

Except for grades three and six in 1991-92, students met all program objectives. Evaluators recommended that:

- Based upon its highly successful record at demonstration sites, L.T.R.T.A. should be expanded to serve greater numbers of students throughout the New York City Schools.
- Staff development should include training in computer technology and its application to reading and the arts; this training should include participating classroom teachers.
- A longitudinal study of program participants should be instituted to determine the sustained effects of the program on participants.
- An in-depth analysis to identify the impact of art education on student achievement and student affect appears warranted.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's Student Progress Evaluation Unit (OREA/S.P.E.U.) under the direction of Henry Solomon. Yvonne Spoerri-Simons, Art Evaluation Coordinator, served as project supervisor during the 1991-92 school year and Mary Mirabito, consultant to OREA, performed this task in 1990-91. Harry Cason and Malcolm Mooney conducted field interviews, program observations, and site visits. Daniel Light performed statistical analyses. Harry Cason wrote the report and Carol Meyer served as senior editor.

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I. INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Learning to Read Through the Arts (L.T.R.T.A.) is an intensive holistic reading and reading-oriented arts instruction program for Chapter 1-eligible students*. Its overarching goal is to increase students' achievement in reading and writing through an interdisciplinary, thematic approach that integrates a total arts program--including visual and performing arts--with a total reading and writing program. It provides not only remedial but also developmental and enrichment activities and skills, and has been recognized as exemplary at the national, state, and local level.

Structurally, the program employs the services of reading teachers and artist/teachers who provide workshops running slightly less than two-and-one-half hours each. The reading teacher uses creative, arts-oriented materials related to the site's theme in the reading/writing workshop, and the artist/teacher provides arts activities that are reading- and language-oriented in the arts workshop. The classroom teacher assists

*Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act provides federal funding to school districts that offer remedial programs designed to address student needs in basic reading, writing, mathematics, and English-language proficiency. A school is eligible for Chapter 1 funds if its percentage of low-income students is equal to or greater than the citywide average based on a formula which calculates students' eligibility for free lunches and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (A.F.D.C.). In order to be eligible for Chapter I services, a student must reside within a targeted neighbor and either score below a designated cut-off point on state-mandated standardized reading tests or--as specified by the Chapter 1 Evaluation Reporting System--be selected on the basis of classroom performance.

with both workshops as one or the other needs emphasis, and then reinforces the skills gained when students return to their regular class. In the 1991-92 program, students received 63 days of instruction, for a maximum of 150 hours of such instruction.

L.T.R.T.A. has been in operation in New York City's public schools since 1971, and is currently under the auspices of the Office of Professional Development and Leadership Training under the Deputy Chancellor for Instruction and Development.

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) has evaluated the Learning to Read Through the Arts program for a number of years. This report presents its combined findings for the 1990-91 and 1991-92 program year.

PROGRAM FUNDING AND SITES FOR 1990-92

In 1990-91 the L.T.R.T.A. program operated at two school-based sites in Manhattan and one boroughwide site in each of three boroughs: the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. The program served 467 students that year.

For the 1991-92 school year, the Division of Funded Programs asked that the program be entirely school-based, and that the participating schools include six Schools Under Registration Review (SURR) schools*. These schools included PS 27 and PS 163 in the Bronx, PS 181 in Queens, and PS 92, PS 304, and PS 314 in

*In 1989-90, under the State's Excellence and Accountability Program (EAP), a number of schools were designated Schools Under Registration Review (SURR). The schools were identified on the basis of substandard and declining performance over three years on any one state standard. SURR schools are required to form schoolbased planning teams to prepare school improvement plans designed to bring them up to standard.

Brooklyn. This restructuring of program sites was recommended as a three-year effort in order to assist in the improvement of Chapter 1 programming in the selected schools. The program also served two non-SURR sites in Manhattan--PS 11 and PS 20. Student eligibility for program participation remained the same, including serving limited English proficient (LEP) students (who are exempted from standardized testing) on the basis of teacher ratings or classroom performance. Funding was in the amount of \$979,000 for 1990-91 and \$1,100,000 for 1991-92.

A total of 867 students were served in 1991-92--an increase of 86 percent from the previous year. This increase included the addition of 110 second grade students, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Learning to Read Through the Arts
Distribution of Students by Grade: 1991-92 and 1990-91

Grade	Number of Students	
	1990-91	1991-92
2	--	110
3	33	219
4	146	315
5	169	117
6	119	106
Total	<u>467</u>	<u>867</u>

- The largest increases in number of students served were in grades two (a new population), three, and four.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Objectives for both the 1990-1991 and the 1991-1992

L.T.R.T.A. program were as follows:

- Seventy percent of general education students will make statistically significant mean gains on standardized reading tests.
- Sixty percent of the LEP students will master at least five additional reading skills on the Wisconsin Design Skills Development Test from pretest to posttest.
- All students will show statistically significant mean gains from pre- to posttest on holistically scored writing samples.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

OREA's purposes in conducting the 1990-1991 and 1991-1992 program evaluations were to describe program implementation, and assess program impact on student achievement in reading and writing. To achieve these aims, evaluators:

- reviewed program documents and materials;
- interviewed program staff, classroom teachers, and principals to gather information about program organization and funding, the curriculum, and parent and staff development activities;
- made classroom and site observations of instruction, teacher/student interaction, and overall program implementation; and
- analyzed students' scores on standardized reading tests.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

Chapter II presents evaluators' findings regarding program implementation for both program years. Chapter III discusses student outcomes, and Chapter IV presents OREA's conclusions and recommendations for the program.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

STAFFING AND SITES

Project funds supported a project director, a part-time program coordinator, two teacher trainers, and two hourly office aides based at the central office located at P.S. 156 in the Bronx. In 1990-1991, field staff included seven reading teachers, nine arts professional, and a site coordinator who managed on-site operations and also served in an instructional (arts or reading) capacity. In 1991-1992, school-based staff included eight reading teachers and eight arts professionals.

O.R.E.A. evaluators visited L.T.R.T.A. program sites during 1990-91 and 1991-92 school years. Program sites were clean and well-maintained and classrooms were well-illuminated, adequately heated and ventilated, and equipped with shelves, storage lockers, and moveable furniture. All site classrooms displayed vocabulary lists, art terms, synonym-antonym charts, student tests and compositions, and teacher-made materials. Student art work was exhibited in classrooms and throughout the school. Art work included self-portraits, paintings, murals, printing blocks, blueprints, photographs, models, and pottery.

Evaluators also interviewed school and program staff, including reading and art teachers, classroom teachers, and principals (five of each in 1991-92). Of the ten L.T.R.T.A. staff members who were interviewed, four had ten or more years experience with the program, one had over eight years, three had five or more years, and two had over one-and-a-half years.

Ten classroom teachers completed an OREA survey. Four of the ten respondents were first-year participants in L.T.R.T.A.; the others had from two to six years experience in the program.

FACTORS CRITICAL TO PROGRAM SUCCESS

The observations and interviews conducted by OREA evaluators resulted in the identification of a number of factors that manifest the program's philosophy and are crucial to its success. These critical factors are described below.

A Theme Provides a Focus for the Curriculum

Each year, themes provide a focal point for L.T.R.T.A. workshop activities. During the 1990-91 and 1991-92 program years, multiculturalism provided the main focus for L.T.R.T.A. activities. Appendix A provides an overview of each site's program emphasis during the 1990-91 school year.

Other sorts of themes were used during the 1991-92 school year. P.S.27 in the Bronx, for example, used the theme Beauty and Creativity in Ourselves and Around the World to help students consider the relationship between the self and the community, both at home and around the world. America: An Ethnic Quilt allowed students at P.S. 92 in Brooklyn to learn about folk cultures of different countries, while the theme Traveling Through Time enabled students at P.S. 11 in Manhattan to see how different people have dealt with the issues of their eras and cultures.

Themes were integrated into all of the reading and art

activities and provided an underlying coherence to learning activities, which became interdisciplinary. As explained by an artist teacher:

"The theme is important because it limits and focuses us. It gives us a lot of direction. The instruction all relates back to a common idea. The theme gets the kids really involved; they get immersed in this topic. And it keeps me on target."

Teachers reinforced each other because instruction was constantly being related to a central idea that was integrated throughout the workshops. This was described by an L.T.R.T.A. teacher in the following way:

"L.T.R.T.A. staff and classroom teachers can bring something to each other. These children are here because the traditional teaching mechanisms are not working. We bring to teachers a different set of strategies and experiences to help them reach their students. It's important to have a cooperating teacher, because it would be terrible if our work was negated by not being used at the schools."

This approach permitted L.T.R.T.A. to focus on many different subject areas within a single theme. Classroom teachers applied this method to subjects such as social studies, math and science. For example, when the art workshop dealt with colors and color mixing, students were studying prisms in the classroom.

Thematic work was also extended to outside organizations working with the school. P.S.20 in District 1, for example, is the site of a special arts collaborative involving four different arts organizations. The artist and reading teachers from P.S.20 reported that collaboration and integration between two of these on-site art programs (Museum of Modern Art and Studio In A School

Association) and L.T.R.T.A. staff occurred regularly, through such activities as sharing materials and space, and cooperating in the making and displaying of masks. Other L.T.R.T.A. school sites also reported collaboration with on-site arts programs.

Arts Instruction Incorporates All Modalities and Moves from the Concrete to the Abstract

L.T.R.T.A. taps students' various strengths through its multi-modality instruction which incorporates all of the learning modalities: visual, aural, tactile, and kinesthetic. A teacher noted:

"Our process is geared toward emphasizing the strengths of the child. This approach is multi-sensory, so that if one type of strategy isn't working there are many more that the child can pick up from. It's a wonderful part of the art that it incorporates all the modalities."

And another teacher noted:

"The art skills are learned developmentally. They begin with lines, shape, form. They use painting to show how different colors are created. They learn basic skills such as cutting and pasting. This way they learn basic concepts; especially if they are low functioning students, they can start very simply. When they see they can master these skills, they are willing to take chances. They produce amazing art that would have seemed way beyond them. We plan it so they will be successful."

Before abstract concepts such as compare, contrast, etc. are taught, teachers use an activity to illustrate the concept. In this non-linear way, children learn to grasp the abstract level. While this is an automatic process for good readers, children who are not good readers are able to develop and learn this process through L.T.R.T.A.'s integrated program.

For example, when students created masks, they also created

feelings and meanings, which lead to the written word and the explanation of complex, abstract ideas. This progression from concrete, experiential art-based tasks to more abstract reading/writing skills was described by a reading teacher:

"We are an experiential program. By doing the art, the vocabulary we use becomes real. Normally, they read stories and it doesn't mean anything to them. The way we do it, the stories are interesting and easier to understand. For example, we studied Cubism and Realism, and they did art representative of both schools. I can now do lessons comparing the two schools and the children have the experience to get the lesson."

Respondents constantly stressed that reading and writing activities were based on art projects and concrete experiences. One teacher described the integration of these activities by stating:

"I work off of the art teacher; I work from the concrete art to the abstract concepts of reading . . . Art is also about vocabulary development and following instructions. These are transferable to reading. . . We are getting them involved in what they're reading about; it's experiential. For example, after spending time making and reading about fans, "fan" is now a word they own. . . We are always relating the art activity to reading and writing tasks."

Students Are Exposed to Original Arts Sources

In addition to theme workshops, students participated in field trips and special events approximately three times a month. Groups ranging in size from 25-65 students, accompanied by one of the L.T.R.T.A. teachers and the classroom teacher, visited various cultural institution throughout the city. In 1991-1992 field trips included visits to the Noguchi Garden Museum, The Cloisters, The Brooklyn Museum, and The New York Historical Society. In 1990-91, trips included visits to the Whitney

Museum, the Staten Island Children's Museum, and Lincoln Center.

These outings were an extension of the curriculum and were designed to coincide with teacher-prepared materials and classroom lessons. After the trips, students went on to create their own work and shows. Displaying their own creations boosted self-esteem. As one teacher noted, students responded well to field trips:

"Field trips give the student a cultural experience they would not have had otherwise. It's a form of modeling for them; showing what the "masters" have done. And it opens up the doors of awareness. We can introduce them to folk artists' work at the museums, and now they too can become folk artists. The masks they have created are now on display at the Museum of the City of New York. Students can come full circle, from studying about the masters, and seeing their work on display, they have gone to being on display themselves."

Teachers reported that these experiences excited and inspired students. An art teacher observed:

"The children get to see what they've been studying. I did a whole lesson on the difference between reproductions and the originals; the different experiences of both. They could then experience this for themselves. We were on the theme of quilts, and we went to the Museum of American Folk Art to see quilts from America's past. And at the Brooklyn Museum, they were able to see native American art that was quilt-like. The students then designed their own quilts. It was a terrific experience for them to see the originals. It reinforced our lessons; they were familiar with what they were seeing. And it shows them that learning can go on outside of school."

Teachers Develop Materials That Meet the Needs of the Students

Because L.T.R.T.A.'s holistic instructional approach is so unique, teaching materials are often generated by the collaborating team at each site, making good use of the creative energies of each team member and highlighting the importance of a team

approach to instruction. This encourages the teachers to be creative in developing lessons students would enjoy, since they know they also have the flexibility to change lessons where warranted. A reading teacher described this process as follows:

"I plan around the arts. I wait for the students to get some experience through the art, then I go more in depth by introducing reading/writing and literature. I get advance notice on the topics to be covered in my class and in the art workshop, and I plan based on this."

Because planning requires intense interaction among team members, a built-in support system evolves and team motivation is enhanced. A classroom teacher described the process as following:

"We design our own curriculum. This way, what we want to achieve is under our own control. We can develop ways in which our [the staff's] different areas will be intertwined. It's more work because you have to hunt for your own materials [to build the curriculum around], but you understand the curriculum because you developed it yourself. There is a beauty in having this control, and it's fun to do it this way."

This flexible approach to curriculum allows teachers to tailor instruction to the children's needs and skills. A reading teacher explained:

"If a given story is too complex, I can gear it to their level to make it easier for them to succeed. I use some commercially prepared materials, but I present it to their ability. . . . we find stories and activities based on the needs of the children. And we can change and develop the curriculum based on their needs, their experiences, and on the projects they are doing, and the museums they visit."

An art teacher confirmed the success of this approach in the following manner:

"With the freedom of being able to create one's own curriculum, you can adjust the project to their operating level. I look at the curriculum books for the fourth grade level and see that these kids are not there, so I can adjust instruction so they can handle it."

Staff-generated materials geared to the specific needs of students resulted in instruction that was accessible and easily handled. Many L.T.R.T.A. students, accustomed to failure, doubted their ability to complete the projects. However, because lessons began simply, and previous lessons were reinforced throughout the project, success became a reality for these students. This experience with successful learning transferred readily to reading and writing instruction, since children came to gain confidence in themselves. Learning was now seen as interesting and exciting, and not something to be feared.

Reading and Writing Activities Are Constantly Assessed

At the beginning of each school year, reading teachers obtain the Degrees of Reading Power test results for L.T.R.T.A. students, and administer a holistic writing test to both general education and LEP students, and the Wisconsin Reading Skills Development test to LEP students. In addition, classroom teachers flag particular student problems the tests may miss.

These assessment activities enable the teachers to begin developing a complete student-skills profile. Staff also monitor student cognitive and writing development through individual student portfolios. In this way, a record of personal gains is maintained for each student's use. This was explained by a teacher in the following way:

"The children's test scores are helpful because we get an idea of what is appropriate for their reading level. We pre-test to hone in on their particular needs, and then post-test to judge the results of the instruction. More informally, they write all year. We connect writing to everything they do. This allows continual assessment and reassessment of progress and problems . . . the students' personal portfolios (reading folders) and writing journals, along with holistically scored pre- and post-writing tests are an important part of our ongoing assessment."

Staff Members Receive Staff Development Training

Training provided. Professional staff development was ongoing throughout both program years at each school site and at the central program office. Each month, the program director conducted a workshop at each school, an L.T.R.T.A. staff developer visited each school, and the staff from each site attended a professional development meeting at the program office in Manhattan.

In addition, L.T.R.T.A. held a conference/exhibition as a culminating professional development activity each year. The 1990-1991 annual conference/exhibition was held at the Museum of the City of New York, and was attended by over 260 participants. In 1991-1992 the conference/exhibition was held at the School of Visual Arts and attended by more than 300 people.

Artist teachers, reading teachers, and classroom teachers received special training in the L.T.R.T.A. methodology through:

1. a pre-service training orientation dealing with schedules, organizational procedures, workshop management, evaluation procedures, administrative details, courses of study, and the educational activities of the workshops, and
2. weekly seminars dealing with such subjects as the interpretation of standardized testing and diagnostic inventories; developmental analysis of reading, language, and writing skills; improving reading, language, and writing

skills through the use of multi-media materials; strategies for developing thinking skills; utilization of analogous skills in art and reading; the development of reading prescriptions for students; children's literature; sharing and developing reading and writing activities in the reading/language-oriented arts workshops; and the L.T.R.T.A. language experience approach and vocabulary development.

Curriculum development. Reading teachers met weekly with the project director, program coordinator, teacher trainers and/or coordinators to develop curricula in reading, language, and writing for each child. In addition, L.T.R.T.A. curriculum guides were developed and used for staff training, including a staff training handbook, a study skills and rate lessons guide, curriculum-guided reading-oriented arts and practical arts workshop lessons, an L.T.R.T.A. dictionary, and courses of study in ceramics, crafts, dance, filmmaking, graphics, music, painting, photography, printmaking, puppetry, sculpture, theater, works on paper, jewelry, and reading/arts units.

Participants attitudes toward the training. All ten L.T.R.T.A. staff members interviewed in 1991-92 had attended orientation and training workshops and found them useful, particularly the orientation. Training topics considered most useful included the Whole Language approach, new reading and arts theories, methods for lesson plan development, and the basic hands-on experience.

Three out of five classroom teachers interviewed in 1991-92 stated that they received L.T.R.T.A. orientation/training, as did one principal. Topics considered important for future training programs included portfolio training, on-site museum workshops,

the writing process, producing teacher-made materials, multiculturalism, methods of reading/writing integration, computer technology relevant to the arts, and ways of disseminating L.T.R.T.A. concepts. All of the teachers felt that they were more than adequately trained to participate in the program, and rated the cooperation between classroom teachers and L.T.R.T.A. staff as good to excellent.

Respondents stressed that the ongoing intra-staff meetings fostered communication regarding program development and problem solving, built team spirit, and reduced the frustrations of teaching in isolation. A dynamic team environment that was constantly being exposed to external training and to the new teaching strategies generated creative solutions to problems and added an unusual vibrancy to the program. As one staff member said:

"We have staff meetings once a week; the same for in-service meetings. There is constant staff communication. We're not in our own little corner; we share with other staff, we see what they do. I find that older lessons get stale, and in this program I can change the lessons, which increases my own enthusiasm. . . if I need training, I know I can get it. And because we share new strategies with each other, our motivation stays high. We've worked together so long; it's a good group. These are people who continually want to know more. . . we're always sharing info. Working with the same group of people each year is great. We don't have to start over each year, and our motivation rubs off on one another."

Parents Are Involved in the Program

Parental involvement is an integral part of the L.T.R.T.A. program. In both the 1990-1991 and the 1991-1992 school years, parents were invited to assist with class trips, and to attend parental workshops, open houses, and student performances. Since parent attendance was generally greatest during student perform-

ances, L.T.R.T.A. staff used this opportunity to confer informally with parents. In addition, the local Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) held workshops, discussions, and lectures every other month for a total of five meetings per year at the participating schools.

As evidenced by meeting minutes, parents were enthusiastic about the program and its impact on their children. Some parents, for example, shared personal artistic materials with the program, others assisted with field trips, and many attended workshops.

In May of 1991, the L.T.R.T.A. program coordinator sent questionnaires to program parents to elicit their opinions about the program. (A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report as Appendix B.) Parents overwhelmingly agreed that L.T.R.T.A. had helped their children improve their attitudes toward and skills in reading.

The Program Is Supported by School Administrators

Staff agreed that there was much enthusiasm within the school for the program. School administrators provided space, worked out schedules, and targeted classes for the program, and were seen as very supportive overall. Furthermore, the degree of flexibility provided by these administrators allowed efficient handling of problems which were unique to the program.

OVERALL RATINGS

L.T.R.T.A. staff were asked if there were demographic changes and any concomitant teaching/program adjustments--e.g.,

in goals, time schedules, student interest, or working conditions--resulting from the incorporation of SURR schools into the program. Staff responded that there were no discernible changes in teaching/ program procedures, but that there was increased student interest in the program.

Classroom teachers and artist and reading teachers at each school site were asked to use a 10-point scale to indicate how strongly art education had affected their students' development in academic and artistic areas, and in personal and social growth. As shown on Table 2, overall ratings were high, indicating that these staff members felt that the program was having a positive effect on student performance.

Both classroom teachers and principals were asked to rate the importance of various statements about arts education. The results of this query are shown in Table 3. Respondents strongly agreed with that "arts education is a means of developing social/ interpersonal and intellectual skills," and that "arts experiences should be part of every child's regular curriculum." Overall, they were moderately in agreement that arts should be an extracurricular part of a student's program, and that there should be separate courses or experiences in schools for the artistically talented, and were generally much less positive about the idea that allocations of resources should focus on the "three R's" in times of budgetary constraints or that only art specialists should teach art.

TABLE 2

**Learning To Read Through the Arts
1991-92**

**Indication of ways arts education affects student performance
Ratings according to staff experiences and observation***

ACADEMIC AND ARTISTIC AREAS	CSD	CSD	CSD	CSD	CSD	Overall Rating
	PS 11	PS 20	PS 27	PS 63	PS 314	
	(N=3)	(N=3)	(N=3)	(N=2)	(N=3)	
a. Developing students' artistic expertise	10.0	8.3	10.0	10.0	10.0	9.7
b. Improving students' reading	9.7	8.0	10.0	9.0	9.7	9.3
c. Improving students' overall academic performance	9.7	8.0	9.5	8.5	8.7	8.9
d. Developing students' 'higher thinking' skills	9.3	9.0	10.0	8.7	10.0	9.4
e. Analyzing and interpreting	9.3	8.7	9.5	8.0	10.0	9.1
f. Developing students' aesthetic appreciation	10.0	8.0	9.5	9.3	9.7	9.3
g. Other: Socialization	—	—	—	—	—	—
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL GROWTH						
a. Developing self-discipline	8.7	8.7	9.5	7.7	9.3	8.8
b. Developing self-confidence and self-esteem	9.7	9.3	10.0	9.7	10.0	9.7
c. Increasing their ability to cooperate with others	9.3	8.3	10.0	7.7	9.3	8.9
d. Increasing their ability to express themselves verbally	9.7	8.3	9.5	8.0	10.0	9.1
e. Developing leadership skills	9.3	7.0	9.0	7.0	9.7	8.4
f. Developing a personal point of view	9.3	8.3	9.5	8.7	9.3	9.0
g. Developing higher standards for themselves	9.0	8.0	10.0	8.0	10.0	9.0
h. Ability to initiate activity	9.0	8.0	10.0	7.8	9.7	8.9
i. Other: Socialization	—	—	—	—	—	—

* Rating by classroom teachers and arts resource persons: 1 = low, 5 = medium high, 10 = high

- In terms of Academic and Artistic Areas, respondents gave the highest rating to "developing students' artistic expertise" as a way in which arts education affects student performance.
- In terms of Personal and Social Growth, respondents gave the highest rating to "developing self-confidence and self-esteem" as a way in which arts education affects student performance.

TABLE 3

**Learning To Read Through The Arts
1991-92**
Indication of importance school assigns to the following arts education positions
Ratings by staff

Staff Title	Arts education is a means of developing social/ interpersonal and intellectual skills					Arts experiences should be part of every child's regular curriculum					Arts should be an extra-curricular part of a student's program					There should be separate courses or experiences in schools for the artistically talented					In times of budgetary constrictions allocation of funds should focus on the "three R's"					Only art specialists should teach art					
School #	11	20	27	63	314	11	20	27	63	314	11	20	27	63	314	11	20	27	63	314	11	20	27	63	314	11	20	27	63	314	
Principal	4	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	3	4	2	4	2	1	1	4	4	4	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Classroom Teacher	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	1	5	2	2	5	5	4	3	2	4	
Rating by School	4.9	5	5	5	5	4.4	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	4	4	3	4	3	2	2.5	4	4	4	1	3.0	2	1.5	3	3	2.5	2	2	2.5	
Overall Rating	4.9					4.4					3.6					3.3					2.1					2.4					

* Ratings: 1= least important/strongly disagree; 3= moderately important/neither agree or disagree; 5= strongly important/strongly agree

- Overall, respondents gave the highest rating to the notion that "arts education is a means of developing social/interpersonal and intellectual skills", and the lowest rating to the notion that "in times of budgetary constrictions allocation of funds should focus on the 'three R's'".
- The widest range of opinions was received in response to the statement that "only art specialists should teach art."

III. STUDENT OUTCOMES

ATTENDANCE

Students received nearly five hours of workshop instruction per week in the L.T.R.T.A. program, for a maximum of 150 instructional hours. Figure 1 shows the number of hours of instruction students received in 1991-1992, as reported on the LEAP forms prepared for all Chapter I-funded programs. As indicated on the figure, the majority of students received the maximum or close to the maximum number of hours of instruction. Students who received fewer hours of instruction may have had poor attendance, may have entered the program late in the academic year, or may have been scheduled for only a few sessions a month.

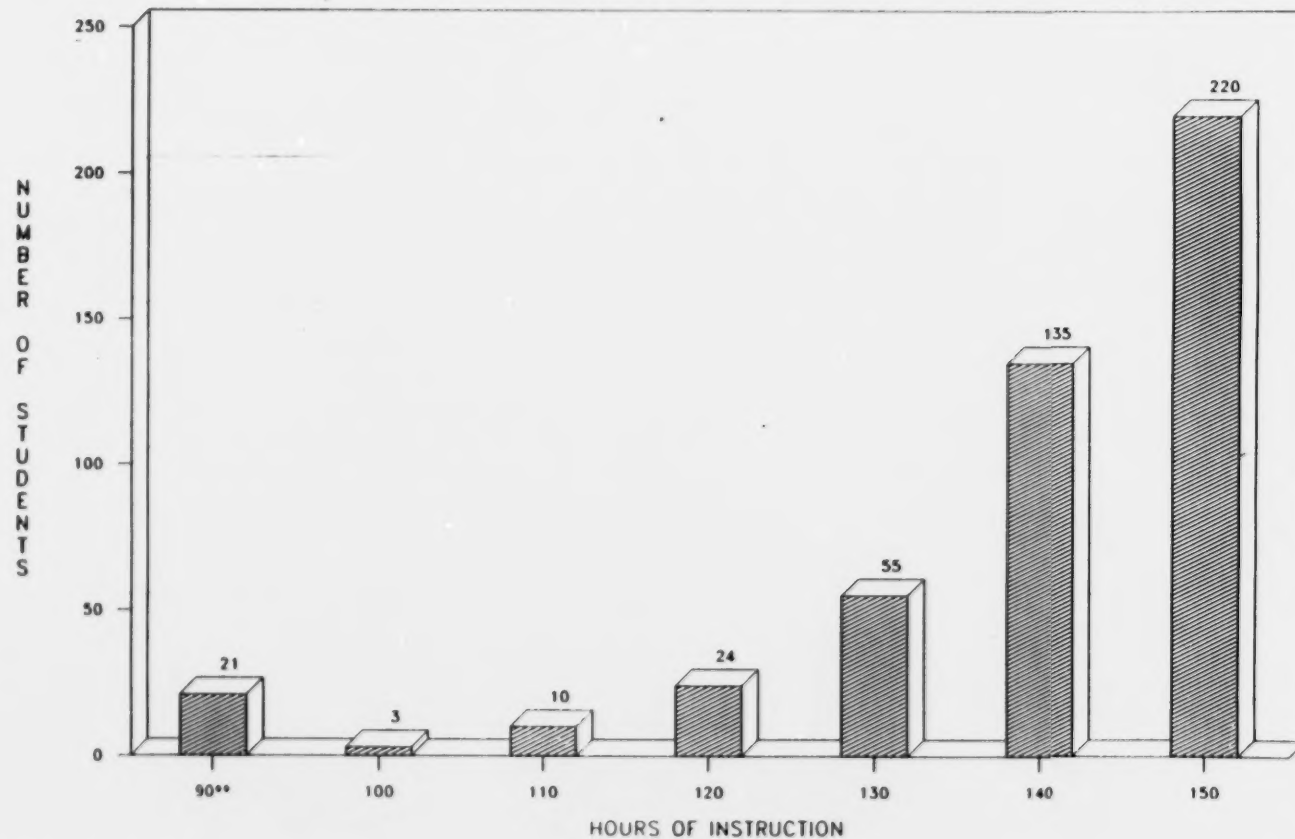
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN READING

General Education Students

Program impact on general education students' reading level was determined by comparing their performance on the Degrees of Reading Power (D.R.P.) test each spring with their score on the test the previous year (the "pretest" score). Analysts converted the raw scores of full-year students with both pre- and posttest information to normal curve equivalents (N.C.E.s)*, and then sorted these results by grade.

*By converting the citywide reading scores to N.C.E.s, we can determine students' progress in relation to that of the national norm group. Students who show N.C.E. gains have improved their standing in relation to the norming group. Those who show no gain have remained in the same relative position even though they may have improved their absolute reading ability.

FIGURE 1
STUDENTS SERVED BY HOURS OF INSTRUCTION*
L.T.R.T.A. 1991-92



*DATA MISSING FOR 125 STUDENTS
**21 STUDENTS HAD 90 HOURS OR LESS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1990-1991 outcomes. Figure 2A presents pre- and posttest D.R.P. scores for third through sixth grade students who participated in L.T.R.T.A. in 1990-91. The difference between their score the previous year and their score this year is the N.C.E. gain for the year, which is also shown in Figure 2B. The two figures show that the aggregated score for students in all grades was greater than their score the previous year, which means that the program objective that 70 percent of the students make gains was exceeded. Grades four and five made the largest mean gains (6.6 and 6.5, respectively).

1991-1992 outcomes. Figures 3A and 3B present D.R.P. data for those students in grades three through six who participated in the 1991-92 L.T.R.T.A. program. As indicated on these charts, grades four and five posted mean gains of 1.3 and 1.1, respectively, while grades three and six showed declines of -2.8 and -1.4 N.C.E.s, respectively. However, as indicated on Figure 3C, these declines were less severe than the declines citywide. Overall, only 60 percent of the students made gains.

A number of factors may have affected the 1991-92 outcomes. One is that the D.R.P. given in grades three and six is the state-mandated PEP test, which has slightly different test items than those used in the other grades. Another factor is that test scores declined as a whole throughout the city in 1991-92. And finally, the fact that this year's program took place in six SURR schools undoubtedly contributed to the drop in test scores. Students in these schools are, by definition, less able readers

FIGURE 2A
MEAN PRE- AND POSTTEST BY GRADE (D.R.P.)
L.T.R.T.A. 1990-91

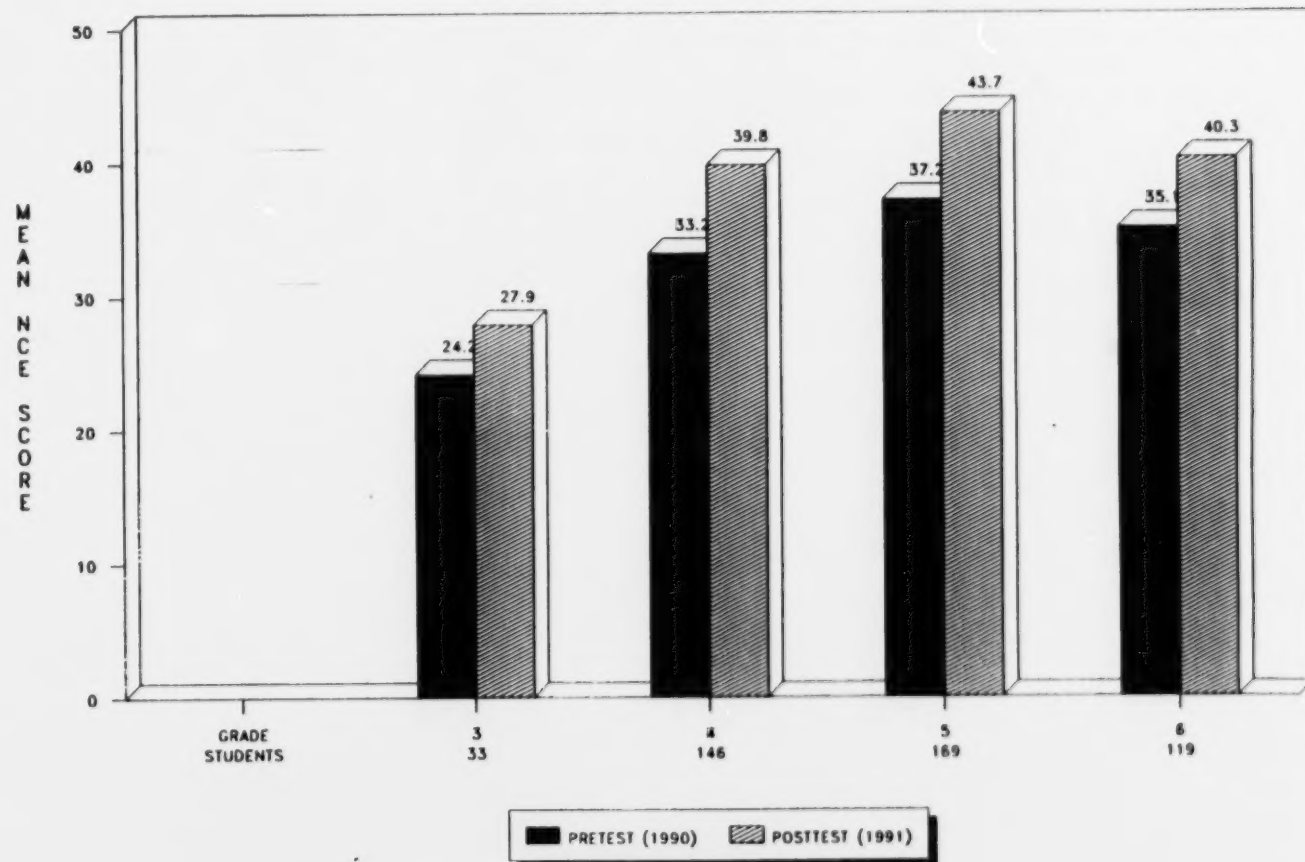


FIGURE 2B
MEAN NCE GAINS BY GRADE (D.R.P.)
L.T.R.T.A. 1990-91

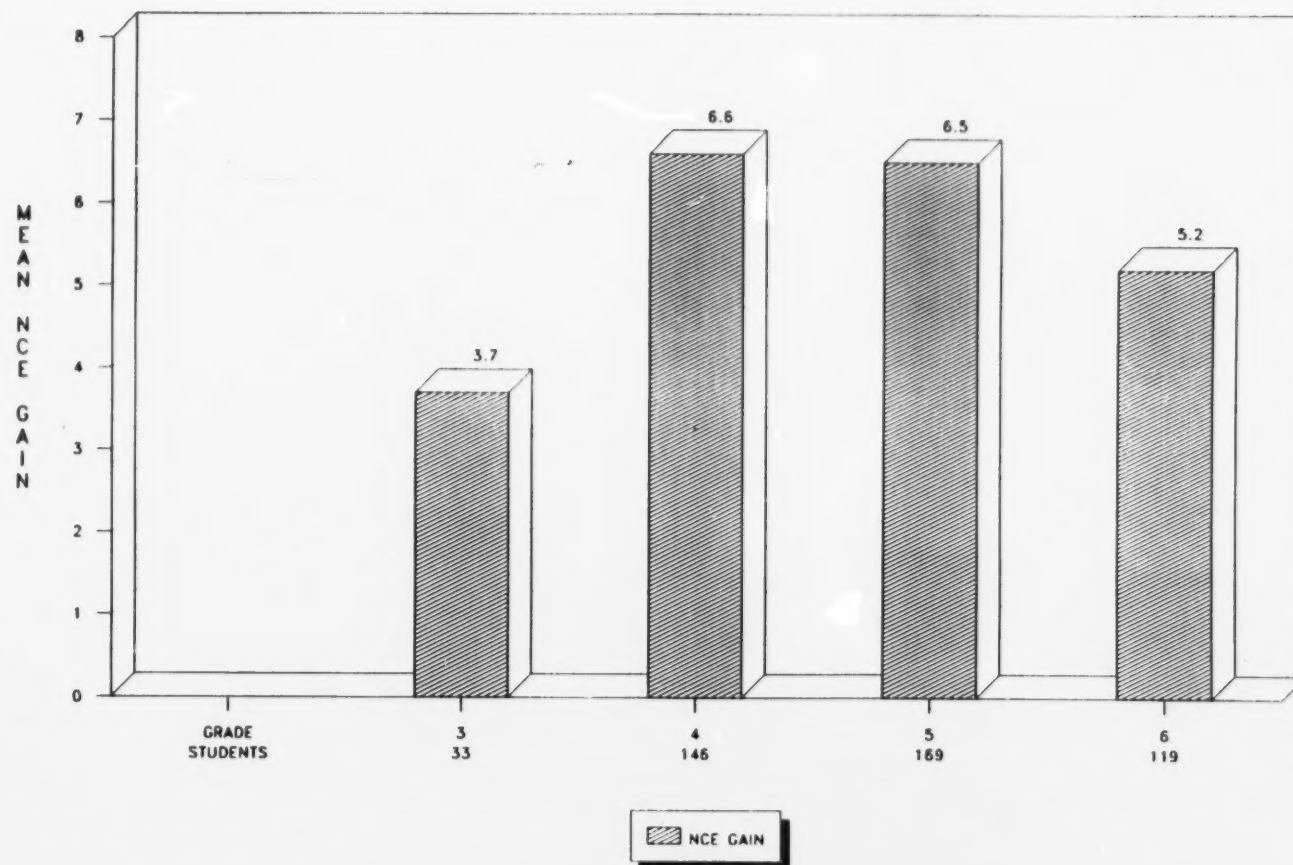


FIGURE 3A
MEAN PRE- AND POSTTEST BY GRADE (D.R.P.)
L.T.R.T.A. 1991-92

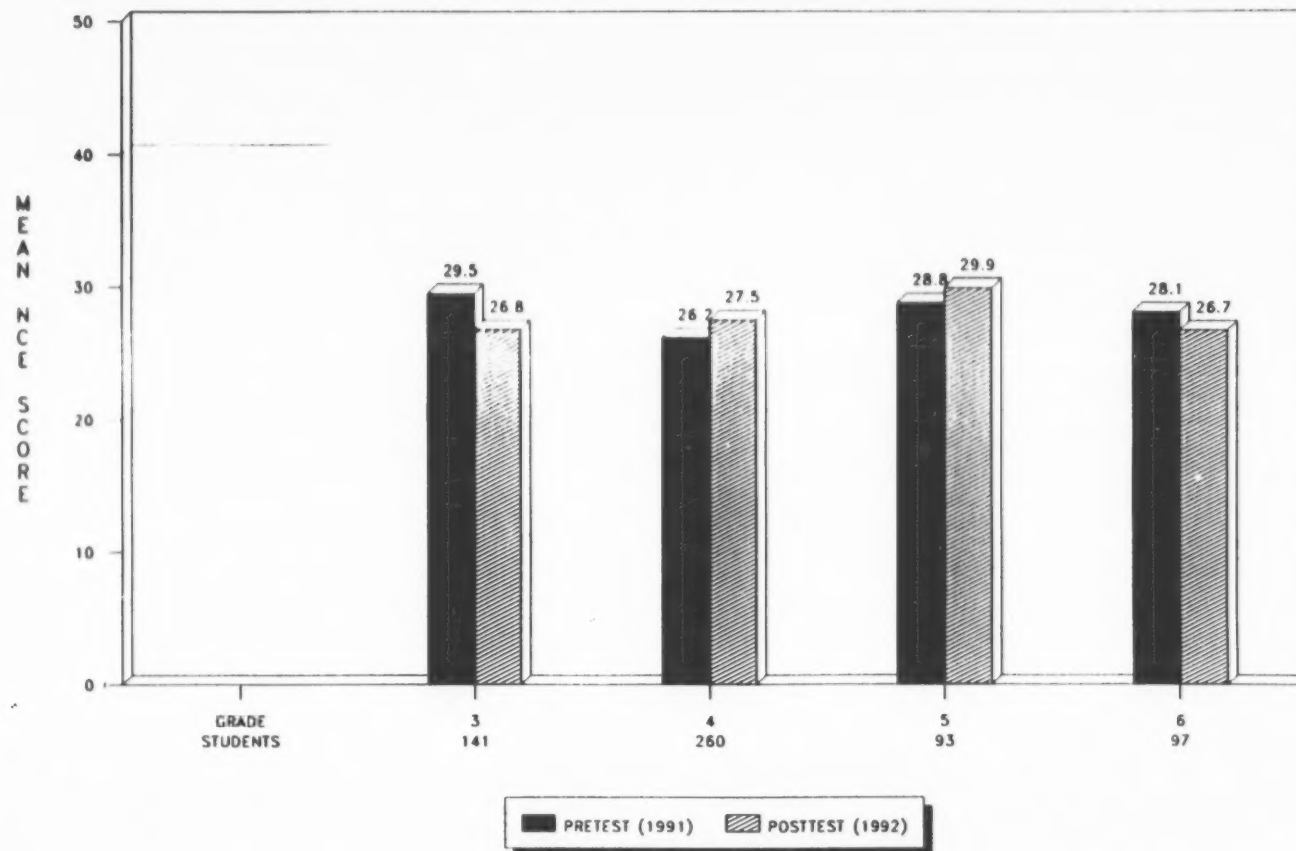


FIGURE 3B
MEAN NCE SCORE CHANGES BY GRADE (DRP)
L.T.R.T.A. 1991-92

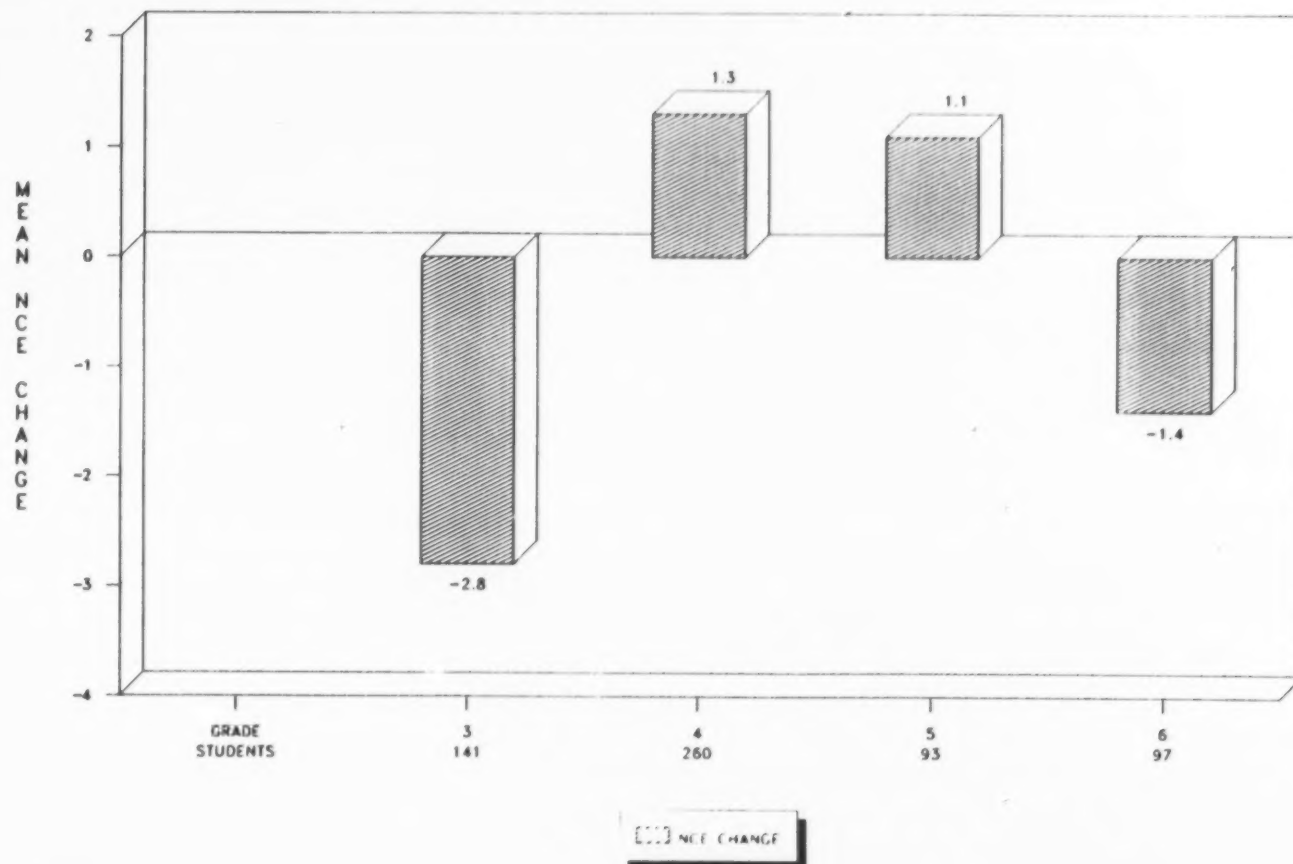
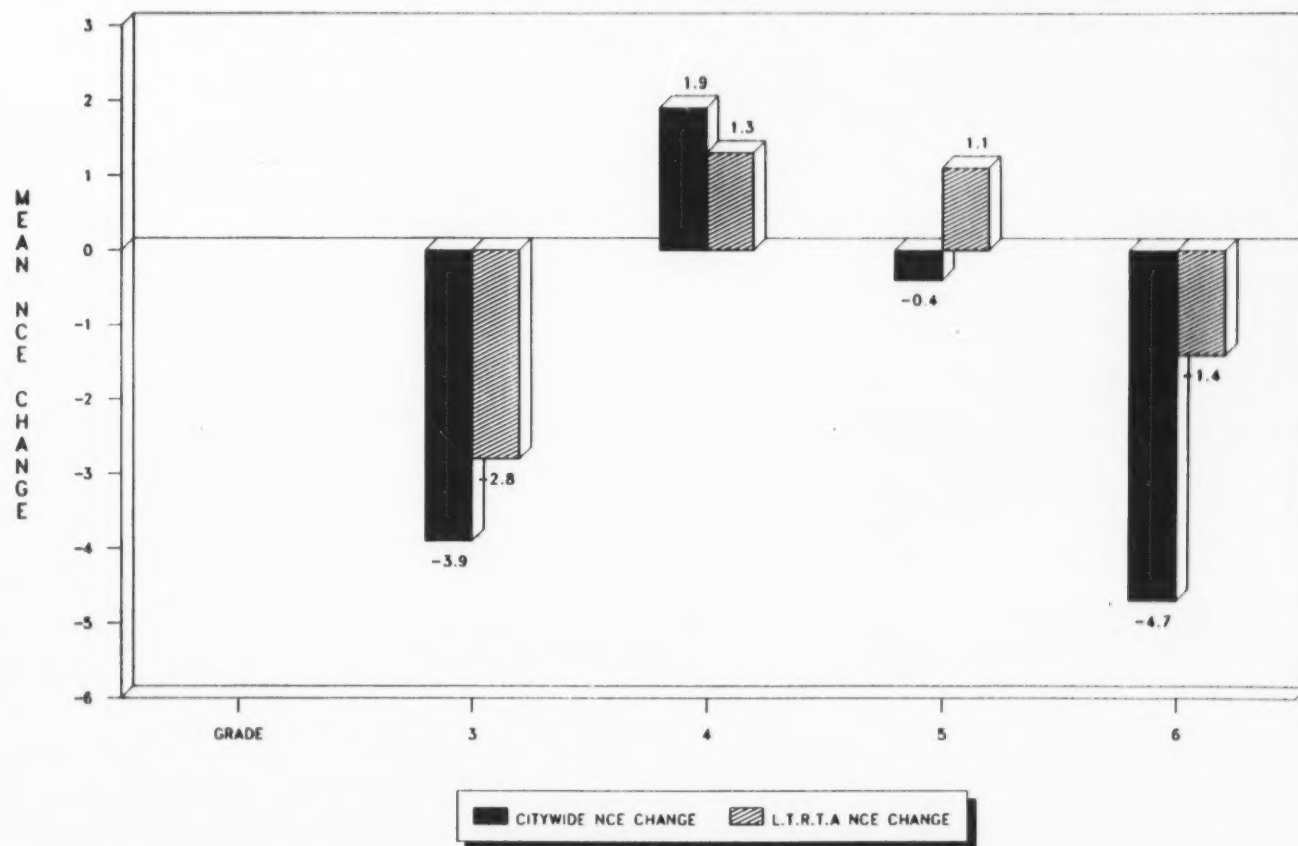


FIGURE 3C
MEAN NCE SCORE CHANGES BY GRADE 1991-92
COMPARISON CITYWIDE* TO L.T.R.T.A.



*1991-92 PRELIMINARY CITYWIDE RESULTS
MEAN DRP UNITS CONVERTED TO NCE SCORES

than in non-SURR schools. The fact that a substantial number of students made gains as a result of the L.T.R.T.A. program redounds to the credit of this innovative program.

Limited English Proficient Students

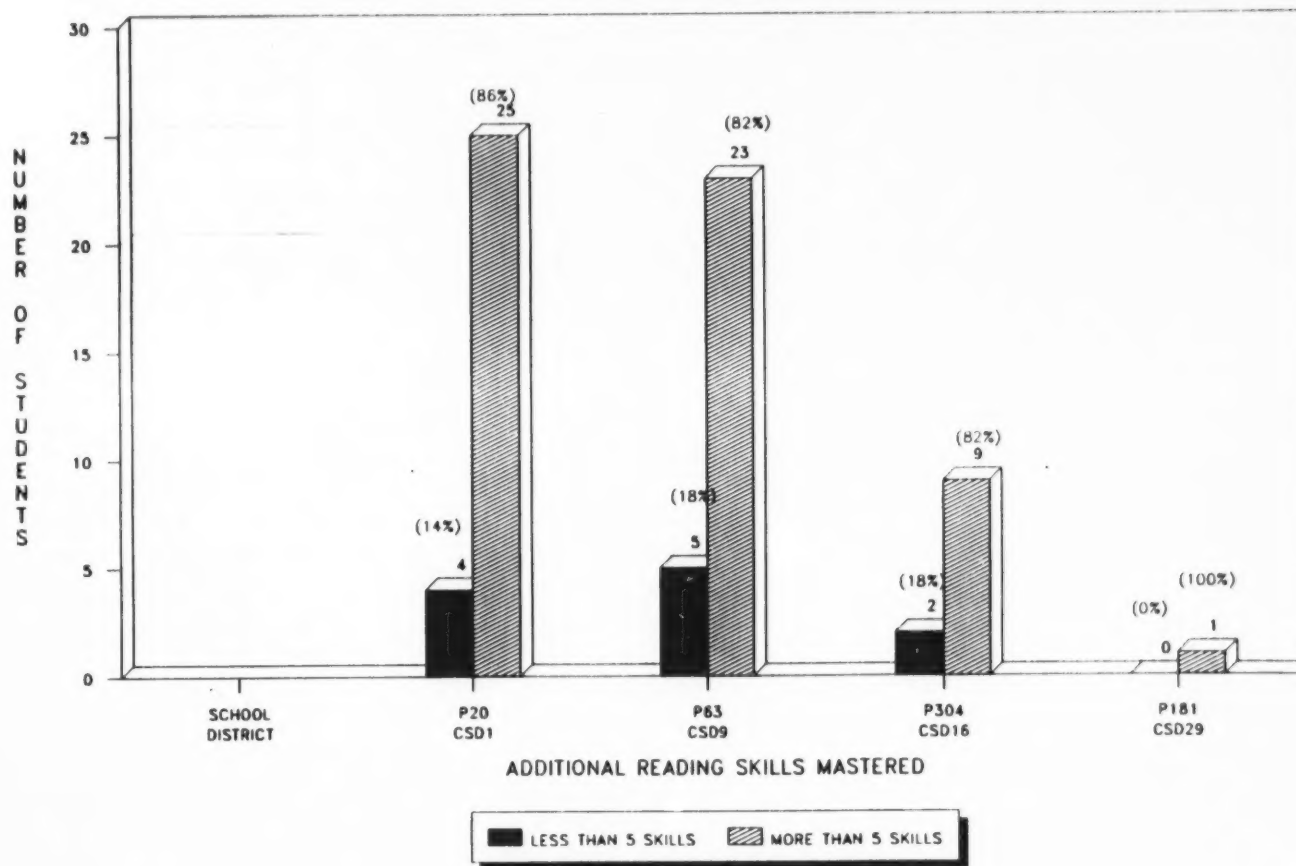
LEP student achievement was measured by the Wisconsin Design Skills Development Test, a criterion-referenced reading test. Evaluators tallied the number of reading skills mastered by each student on the pretest (given in fall 1991) and the posttest (given in spring 1992), and the number of students who mastered additional skills. As shown in Figure 4, over 80 percent of LEP students with test data mastered five or more additional reading skills on the posttest, thus surpassing the program objective that 60 percent of LEP students master at least five additional reading skills on the posttest that they had not mastered on the pretest. Due to restructuring of data retrieval forms and the program itself, these tests scores are available for 1991-92 only.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING

Test Used

Students were given a writing test in the fall and a similar test in the spring. These tests were scored by readers from the program, using a five-point scale that measures how well a student communicates. Readers were asked to pay special attention to the writing sample's coherence, sentence structure, and sequence, and the writer's awareness of the audience. Each writing test was independently scored by two readers. A one-

FIGURE 4
 READING SKILLS MASTERED BY LEP STUDENTS*
 ON THE WISCONSIN DESIGN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TEST**
 L.T.R.T.A. 1991-92



*LEP STUDENTS BY SCHOOL
 **PROGRAM OBJECTIVE: 60 PERCENT OF LEP STUDENTS WILL MASTER AT LEAST 5 SKILLS

point discrepancy between readers was acceptable. However, discrepancies of more than one point required a third reader. The program reported that 98 percent of the cases did not need a third reader.

Writing Outcomes

General education students. Figure 5 presents 1991-92 writing achievement data for 683 general education students in grades two through six. Students in all grades made statistically significant mean gains, thus meeting the program's objective for this achievement area. The overall mean gain for all students was a raw score of 1.7. Test scores available for 1991-92 only.

Limited English proficient students. Figure 6 presents 1991-92 achievement data for 49 LEP students in grades two and three. Students in grade two made a mean raw score gain of 1.2, while students in grade three made a mean raw score gain of 1.7. Tests scores available for 1991-92 only.

FIGURE 5
HOLISTIC WRITING TEST SCORES
GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY GRADE
L.T.R.T.A. 1991-92

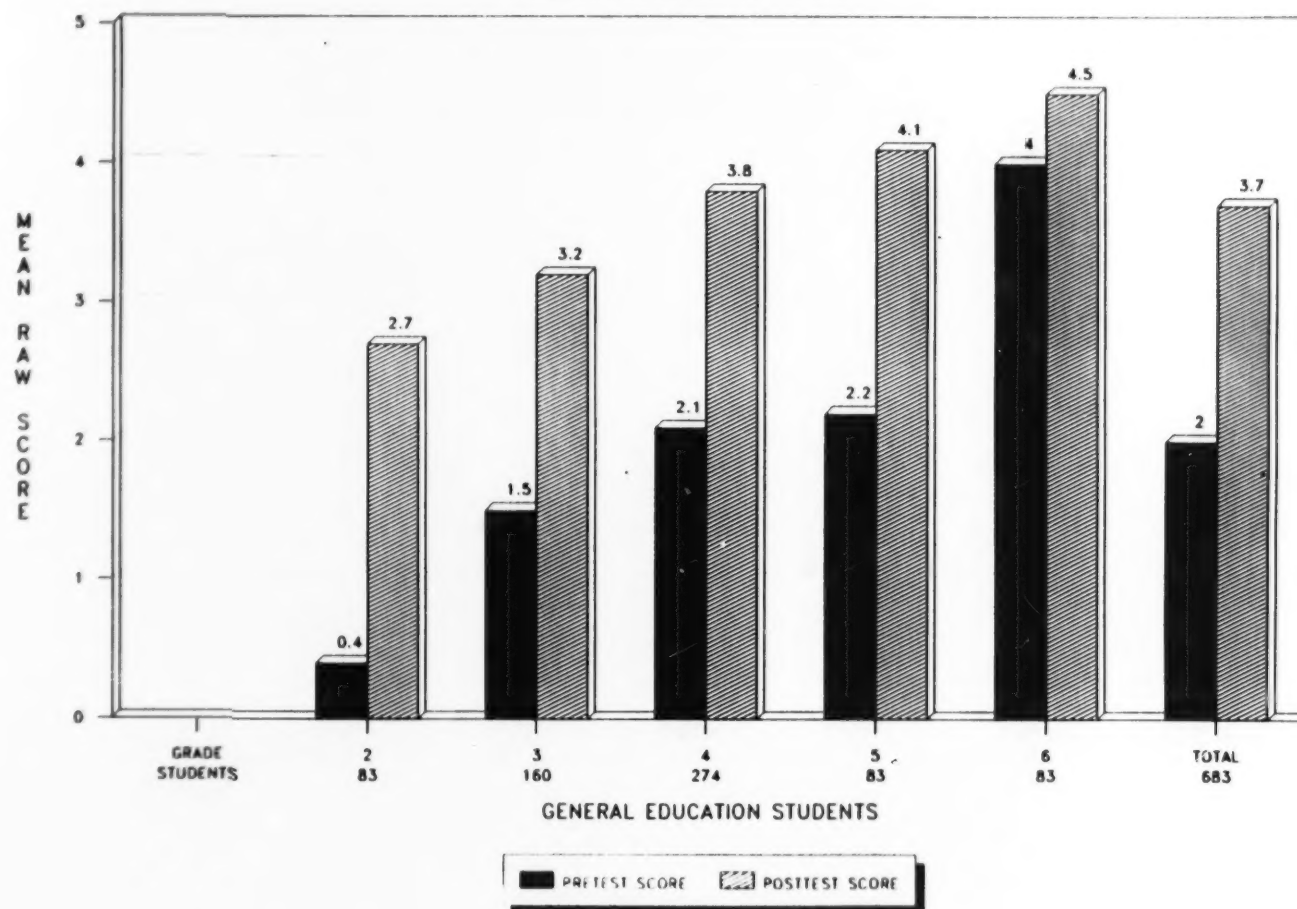
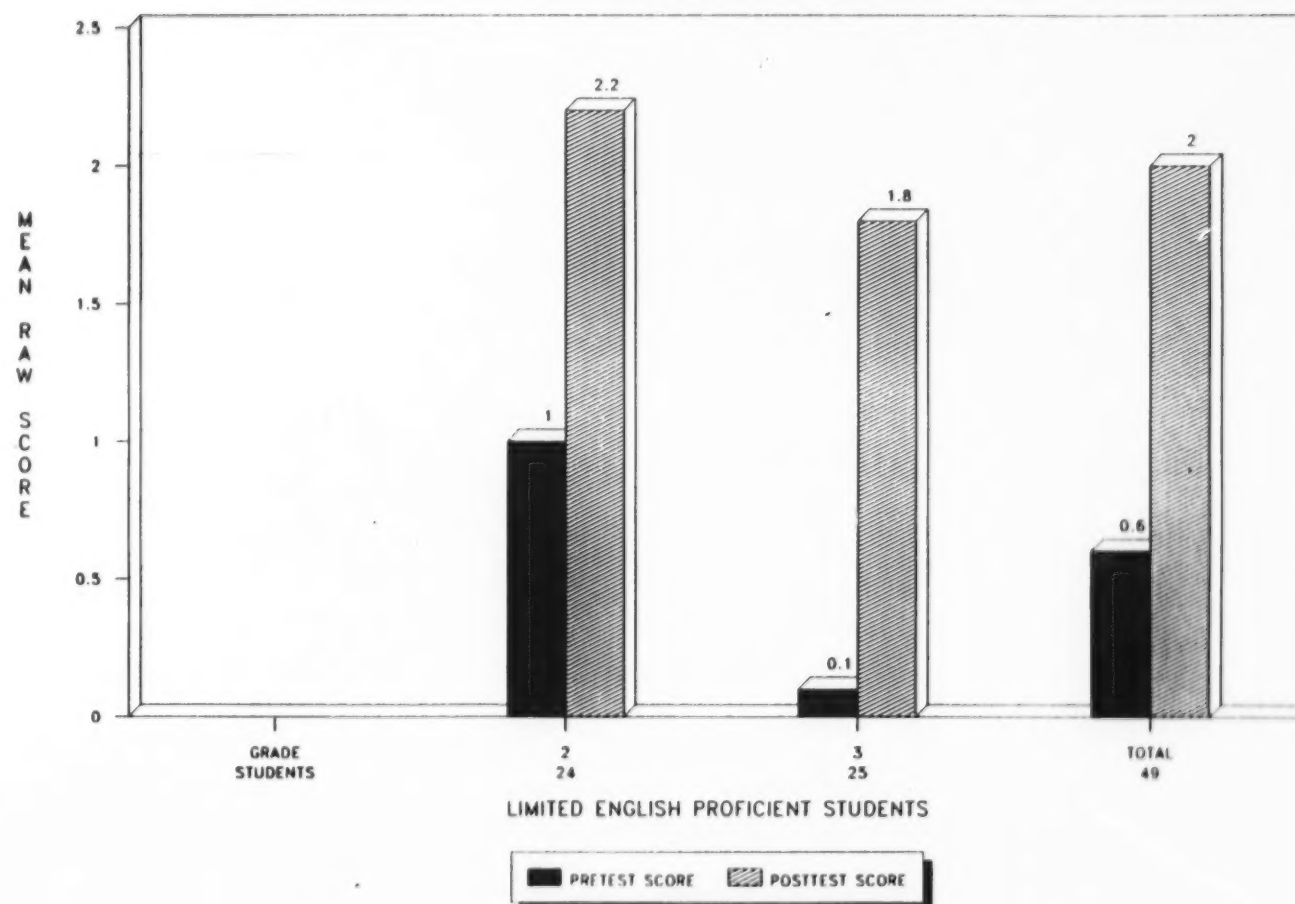


FIGURE 6
HOLISTIC WRITING TEST SCORES
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS BY GRADE
L.T.R.T.A. 1991-92



IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The Learning to Read Through the Arts program is an established, well-defined program which has evolved into a sophisticated, collegial team venture by integrating reading/writing and arts instruction into a theme-based holistic educational experience. The program provides an opportunity for children to enter a new environment and feel special--a departure from the often negative image of compensatory education programs. It also has positive effects on program participants and on the school environment in general.

OREA's review of program documents, observation of program activities, and interviews with program and participating school staff indicated that L.T.R.T.A. was implemented as proposed during both program years under review, and was well organized and effective at all sites. Program staff were observed to be professional and collegial, and students were engaged and enthusiastic. Staff development was well thought out and thorough, parents were enthusiastic about the program, and administrators supported the program admirably. Survey respondents agreed that the program was having a positive effect on students' academic abilities and self-esteem, and that arts education should definitely be a part of each child's academic program.

All program objectives for student improvement in reading and writing were met or surpassed, with the exception of third

and sixth grade students on the D.R.P. in 1991-1992. As noted in the text, this particular outcome was influenced by several factors. One was the fact that the scores of the citywide population as a whole declined during this year. Another important factor is that the 1991-92 program took place in six SURR schools, where students are, by definition, less able readers than students in non-SURR schools. The fact that a substantial number of these students made gains as a result of the L.T.R.T.A. program can only be seen as evidence of the program's effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since its inception, the Learning to Read Through the Arts Program has produced positive student outcomes and received very positive program evaluations. The following recommendations are made to further refine the program's components, improve program operations, and identify new areas of evaluation and research inquiry.

- Based upon its highly successful record at demonstration sites, L.T.R.T.A. should be expanded to serve greater numbers of students throughout the New York City Schools.
- Staff development should include training in computer technology and its application to reading and the arts; this training should include participating classroom teachers.
- A longitudinal study of program participants should be instituted to determine the sustained effects of the program on participants.
- An in-depth analysis to identify the impact of art education on student achievement and student affect appears warranted.

APPENDIX A

L.T.R.T.A. SITES PROGRAM OVERVIEW: 1990-91

Learning to Read Through the Arts Program
New York City Public Schools
Developer/Demonstrator Project, National Diffusion Network
United States Department of Education

Barbara A. Neuner
Program Coordinator

OVERVIEW

The theme, "Our Multicultural World" fits right in with the mission of P.S. 20, which is to create a climate in which students learn to understand how to resolve conflicts and develop and infuse a multicultural curriculum.

Our goal is to make the students aware of the similarities of all the cultures that make up their neighborhood, the Lower East Side.

In the Dance workshop, the students helped to create a dance based on the story of Swimmy, by Leo Lionni. In this project, all the little fish have to learn to swim together in order to survive. The children learned that conflicts need to be settled, so that all can live in harmony.

Another class learned about various cultures through folk dance, and finally, yet another group learned to resolve conflict through humor. They created a Roaring 20's dance in which all opposing factions shook hands and came out "Charlestoning" together in the end.

Through the language development of these experiences and with literature the students have broadened their reading and writing skills. We have learned about various cultures from reading folk tales from around the world, including Ananse, the Spider, Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters and various versions of Cinderella. We have also read Fables by Aesop, Lionni and Lobel and created our own. Biographies about Maria Tallchief, Martha Graham, Jerome Robbins, Alvin Ailey and Leonard Bernstein have also helped students to understand various cultures and dance experiences.

We welcome parent involvement and hope that this thematic approach helps the students to improve their language and reading skills and to be good citizens in a diverse and exciting community.

Manhattan Site I

Amelia Wieder
Martha Cataldo

Learning to Read Through the Arts Program
New York City Public Schools
Developer/Demonstrator Project, National Diffusion Network
United States Department of Education

Barbara A. Neuner
Program Coordinator

Overview Manhattan II

Manhattan II is exploring the ancient cultures of Egypt, Mexico and Europe. This is being done through mixed media, writing, comprehension and literature.

First, the students study each culture in their own classroom. Then, in mixed media, they further examine the patterns, designs, symbols and techniques of each culture. Art projects are then created in conjunction with this study.

In the reading workshop the students use research skills and literature to learn more and further their understanding of each culture. This is used as a basis for students' writing.

Our goal is to have each student better understand each culture by interrelating the social studies curriculum and the Learning to Read Through the Arts philosophy.

By Manhattan II

Judith Lorenzo
Debra Jacoby

Learning to Read Through the Arts Program
New York City Public Schools
Developer/Demonstrator Project, National Diffusion Network
United States Department of Education

OVERVIEW

According to Governor Cuomo, "What makes us all the same is a lot more than what makes us all different." Sharing this view, the Bronx Site chose as its theme, "The Multicultural Connection: Pride in Who I Am, Respect for One Another, Together we can make a better world!"

Our art and reading projects focused on and reflected the rich heritage of our students. Children created an animal mosaic, based upon Edward Hicks' Peaceable Kingdom showing animals of different natures living together in peace and harmony. They made multicultural masks, which enabled students to fulfill their fantasies, research their cultures, and enforce pride in their heritage. Researching family superstitions resulted in a Book of Multicultural Superstitions, written and collated by the students. An in-depth study of Charlotte's Web, by E.B. White provided insight into characterization and interrelationships. The multicultural backgrounds of our students comprise a beautiful mosaic of children, who working together, will provide the future of New York City.

Bronx Site

Sheila Liebowitz
Gloria Falk
Bernard Wiener
Mona Zandner
Aileen Robinson

Learning to Read Through the Arts Program
New York City Public Schools
Developer/Demonstrator Project, National Diffusion Network
United States Department of Education

Barbara A. Neuner
Program Coordinator

OVERVIEW

The Learning to Read Through the Arts Brooklyn Site's theme is America: An Ethnic Quilt. The students are learning about folk cultures of many different countries. Through painting, mixed-media, photography, music and literature the students explored multi-cultural themes. Some of the projects included singing international songs, photographing each other in folk costumes, painting Navajo rug designs and making Indian weavings, learning about different music styles of ethnic groups, creating quilt and folk designs, and folk costume portrait pins. Folk tales from many different countries were read, listened to, and used as a basis for student writings. The goal of the year was for the students to learn about and respect other cultures and their own heritage.

Brooklyn Site

Diane Pillarella
Susan Ledwith
Judith Kugel
Christine Sinnott
Fran Milstein

Learning to Read Through the Arts Program
New York City Public Schools
Developer/Demonstrator Project, National Diffusion Network
United States Department of Education

Overview -- Queens Site

The Queens Site began to explore the theme of "East, West and Beyond," with a trip to the Isamu Noguchi Museum. The Japanese-American sculptor's cultural heritage blends the essence of art based on natural forces with the more materialistic facets of Western culture. At the Noguchi Museum the dance class imitated and complemented the artist's sculptures by making body shapes. This was captured on video.

Other trips such as a visit to Astor Court (the Asian Garden) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art provided inspiration for the children to design Asian fans and Kimonos, and to interpret the story of The Paper Crane by Molly Bang through dance.

The students read a variety of Asian folk-tales, such as The Five, Six and Seven Chinese Brothers, and wrote original stories which they called The Eight Brothers or Sisters.

Other children made Kokeshi, Asian folk dolls using the Chinese Astrological Calendar. They designed birth certificates and wrote biographies for their figures.

The children read The Dream Eater, a Japanese tale. They created creatures to "eat up" their worst nightmares and they illustrated a book. The students also rewrote this Japanese tale in modern idiom.

As the students moved from the East to the West, they made a stop in Eastern Europe by creating paintings in the style of Chagall. Influenced by Chagall's illustrations of La Fontaine's fables, the children wrote their own fables and made pop-up books. Children also wrote transformation stories after being exposed to the fantasy of Chagall.

Students studied the particular works of Matisse and Chagall which had been inspired by the circus. The students were motivated to create their own unique personalities to complement the personalities of the circus characters.

As the students learned to express their feelings and emotions through dance, they explored how artists use color and were inspired to write poems about the way colors made them feel. Hand colored photo portraits enhanced the experience.

A trip to the Cooper Hewitt Museum for their Mondo Materials Exhibit was another bridge toward the Western aesthetic. The students created collages, and collographs as well as dance/dramas using tall tales as inspiration. They also read tall tales hoping to complete their own tall tales as the culmination of The Beyond.

Queens Site
Lois Hellman
Linda Debrow
Frank DiNardo
Nadine Grisar
Shari Rosen